



**STATE OF TENNESSEE**  
**DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES**

6th FLOOR ANDREW JACKSON BUILDING  
500 DEADERICK STREET  
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37243

**BILL HASLAM**  
GOVERNOR

**MARIE WILLIAMS**  
COMMISSIONER

July 2, 2018

Dear Qualified Mental Health Professionals:

First and foremost, thank you for the important role you play in supporting Tennesseans experiencing a mental health emergency. The Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (TDMHSAS) is excited to announce the new redesign of the Certificate of Need (CON) form.

A CON for emergency involuntary admission to a treatment facility should be completed if and only if all of the criteria for emergency involuntary admission or commitment are met pursuant to Tennessee Code Annotated § 33-6-403 (*i.e. a person has a mental illness or serious emotional disturbance, AND the person poses an immediate substantial likelihood of serious harm because of the mental illness or serious emotional disturbance, AND the person needs care, training, or treatment because of the mental illness or serious emotional disturbance, AND all available less drastic alternatives to placement in a hospital or treatment resource are unsuitable to meet the needs of the person.*) Please note that, in accordance with Title 33 of the Tennessee Code Annotated, the form has been redesigned to clarify that you may initiate an emergency detainment instead of completing a first CON, if the purpose of the detainment is to obtain an immediate examination to determine whether the person meets the criteria for emergency involuntary admission or commitment.

A CON should be used as a last resort for a mental health emergency. Less restrictive alternatives should always be considered first, including, but not limited to, crisis stabilization units, crisis walk-in centers, crisis respite services, or other outpatient resources available in your community. If all other less restrictive resources are not appropriate for the individual experiencing a mental health crisis and the person poses an immediate substantial likelihood of serious harm because of a mental illness or serious emotional disturbance, a CON must be completed in accordance with Tennessee Code Annotated § 33-6-404.

As you know, there are three (3) steps to the CON process:

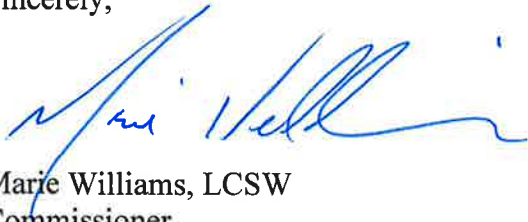
1. Documentation for detaining the person in a mental health crisis;
2. Writing the first CON for an involuntary hospitalization recommendation; and
3. Writing the second CON for involuntary hospitalization admission.

In an effort to simplify and streamline the CON document, TDMHSAS, in collaboration with our legal team, the Tennessee Hospital Association, and other statewide professionals, has redesigned the CON form. This redesign combines all three steps into one document.

We believe that this new combined document will be more efficient and better streamline this important process.

You may download the new CON by visiting our webpage at <https://www.tn.gov/behavioral-health>. Please use the new form beginning **August 1, 2018**.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Marie Williams", is written over a faint, larger blue signature that is partially obscured.

Marie Williams, LCSW  
Commissioner